CITY OF CINCINNATI

Department of Transportation and Engineering
Division of Transportation Planning & Urban Design

Literature Review

Literature Review

- Austin, Texas
- Boulder County, Colorado
- Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Denver, Colorado
- Kent, Connecticut
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Portland, Oregon
- Sacramento, California
- San Diego, California
- San Rafael, California
- Seattle, Washington
- Tiburon, California
- Summary

This section is divided into the following categories: a summary of view protection measures enacted in other municipalities, and a summary of the more salient features of view protection measures taken together.

Austin, TX Capitol View Ordinance

Designed to protect views of the State Capitol building from various vantage points around town, the Austin ordinance is similar to Denver's Mountain View Ordinance (see below). What distinguishes Austin's ordinance is the amount of study and analysis that preceded its adoption. It contains a very complex formula for determining acceptable building heights. Adopted in 1984, the ordinance was introduced to serve aesthetic, educational, civic, and economic goals by protecting and preserving public views of the State Capitol from selected points such as parks, bridges, and major roadways.

Sixty important view corridors were identified and classified into four categories: (1) stationary parks; (2) thresholds along entryways to the city; (3) sustained views; and (4) dramatic glimpses.

The study then analyzed each view from the specific point identified and considered current land uses within the corridor. The overall economic impact of the proposal was analyzed along with the economic impact within each corridor.

Aerial view of Texas Capitol in Austin

Ultimately, this extensive work established a solid framework in support of the ordinance overall, as well as supporting the adoption of individual view corridors that were deemed worthy of high priority protection. This extensive background work also helped defuse opposition as opponents realized that adverse impacts were not as great as imagined.

In the final analysis, nine of the 60 identified view corridors were designated for protection in 1984. The effort proved so successful that local officials adopted 17 more, increasing the number of protected view corridors to 26 (of the original 60 studied) as of 1998.

For more information on Austin, please see: www.ci.austin.tx.us/development/

Boulder County, CO View Protection Overlay District

This initiative was created in order to reduce building heights in areas potentially affecting views. It encompassed the following requirements:

Application: If a structure, lot or other parcel of land lies partly within the View Protection Overlay District, that part of the structure, lot, or parcel shall meet all the requirements for this district as set forth in this code.

Relationship to Underlying Zoning: With the exception of the maximum height structure requirement, the use, lot, building, and structure requirements of the underlying zoning district shall apply to all development within this district.

Maximum Structure Height Requirement:

1. For building lots with a slope of less than 20 degrees, no portion of a structure, including additions to an existing structure, may exceed 35 feet in height as measured from the natural grade of the lot at the lowest elevation within 25 feet of the structure.
2. For building lots with a slope of 20 degrees or greater, no portion of a structure, including additions to an existing structure may exceed 25 feet in height as measured from the natural grade of the lot at the lowest elevation of the structure.

For more information on Boulder, please see:
www.co.boulder.co.us/lu/lucode/pages/article_4_1.htm#4-200

Colorado Springs, CO Hillside Protection Overlay Zoning

Facing intense development pressures in some of its dramatic hillside neighborhoods that back up to Pike's Peak and the Front Range, this city enacted a powerful hillside protection program. It adopted a Hillside Overlay Zoning District that works with its base zoning districts. The purpose of the overlay district is to permit individuals to "develop and maintain hillside properties in an environmentally sensitive fashion," while also ensuring that visual impacts of development are mitigated to the maximum extent possible.

Pike's Peak, CO

The city has adopted a combination of mandatory zoning regulations and recommended design guidelines, to help achieve its goals of aesthetic and environmental protection. The following list illustrates the multiple objectives behind the Colorado Springs Hillside Development Ordinance:

- Have applicable code development standards been met?
- Is terrain disturbance minimized?
- Have cuts and fills been minimized?
- Has the natural land form been retained?

- Have visually compatible stabilization measures been used for cut and fill slopes?
- Have the visual impacts on off-site areas been avoided or reasonably mitigated?
- Have natural features such as slopes and rock formations been incorporated into the site design?
- Has the structure been sited away from the ridgeline?

For more information on Colorado Springs, please see: www.springsgov.com/page.asp?navid=822

Protected view of Rocky Mountains from Denver's Cheesman Park

Denver, CO Mountain View Ordinance

The Denver municipal code contains provisions for restricting the heights of structures that could block views of the Rocky Mountains and the central business district. It invokes both aesthetic and economic reasons to support the ordinance. The issue of view preservation began in 1968, when the proposed construction of a high-rise west of Cheesman Park, resulted in the adoption of the Cheesman Park View Protection Ordinance. Denver currently has 14 view preservation ordinances, ten of which protect views (primarily from parks), three that protect views of the city skyline, and one that preserves views of the Jepssen Terminal at Denver International Airport as seen from Pena Blvd.

In 1973, Denver revised its municipal code to establish "restrictions on structures in the civic center area." Construction limitations are such that no building may be constructed in the designated area greater in height, above mean sea level, than the height of the reference point plus one foot for each 100 feet that the proposed structure is horizontally distant from the reference point. The outer limits of the view area are determined by relating zoning and ground level elevations within the view corridor to potential building heights that might interfere with the view from the reference point.

Denver skyline

This ordinance is found in the Denver Building Code, and it is enforced through issuance of building permits. There is a well-established protocol for considering variances including six criteria for review, and a public hearing presided over by a Planning Board.

While the Denver approach is understood to be quite effective in protecting views from specifically identified locations, it is also known to be time-consuming and expensive to administer.

At the same time, it is not very effective in protecting views seen continuously along identified public thoroughfares.

For more information on Denver, please see: www.denvergov.org/dephome.asp?depid=1571

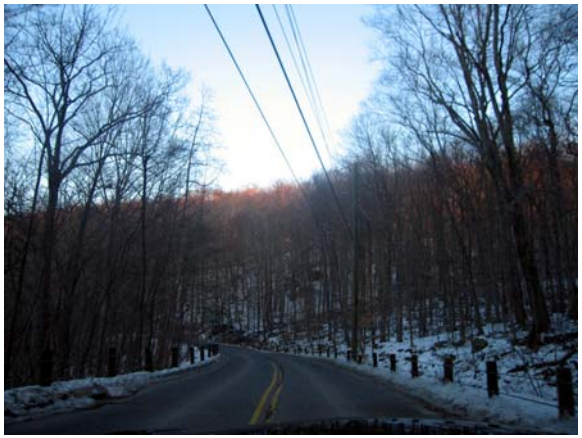
Kent, CT Horizonline Conservation District

The Planning and Zoning Commission of Kent worked with the Housatonic Valley Associaton (HVA), a non-profit conservation organization to develop a GIS-based methodology for protecting the town's scenic vistas. The commission sought HVA's assistance because of its expertise in applying GIS methodologies to solve geographic issues throughout its area of operations. The commission was seeking an empirical, defensible method for targeting visible ridge zones where development should be restricted.

Previous studies had focused on individual variables such as elevation or ridgelines, but these did not match up very well with the scenic (or visible) portion of ridges. GIS is able to integrate multiple data sources and model them (in this particular case) to identify portions of ridges most conspicuous from Kent's roadways.

The study's methodology focused only on those ridges where development would break the horizon, that is, where sky (rather than land) forms the backdrop of a structure.

The study emphasized the delineation of the horizon line rather than the ridgeline as the most critical variable of view preservation. The horizon line is where earth and sky meet when viewed from a particular location. Along the horizon line, structures of any height will break the horizon. The study sought to determine zones before and beyond horizon lines where structures would rise above sight lines and negatively impact an otherwise undisturbed appearance.



Scenic road through Kent, CT

Data on roads, lakes, streams, and sub-basins obtained through GIS data from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection were used to determine horizon belts throughout the community.

ArcGIS 3D Analyst was employed to construct a triangulated image network (TIN) model for the town of Kent, derived from 10-meter resolution digital elevation model (DEM) data. Maximum structure heights were determined by current zoning regulations, which permit a maximum of 35 feet of building height. Areas delineated by the GIS methodology were called horizon belts.

The beauty of this high-tech digital methodology is that, rather than restricting all development in the entire area of a viewshed, use of the GIS-based horizon belt criteria allowed development to occur if it was shown not to negatively impact views.

Four major variables were incorporated in defining the horizon belt. These included:

- Vistas: the study noted that other users of the methodology may have different criteria for vistas, such as trails or rivers, and using multiple vistas from different observation distances or elevations would require multiple analyses.
- Ridges: all distinguishable ridges within the town of Kent were considered.
- Obtrusiveness: using what breaks the horizon as the criterion for obtrusiveness depends on the height of the structure that would obtrude from within the horizon belt. Since Kent uses a zoning regulation of a 35 foot height maximum, this figure became the empirical basis for obtrusiveness.
- Constraints: the constraint for steep slope gradients was based on pre-existing town regulations for building roads.

Ridgeline and horizon view in Kent, CT

By focusing on the most obtrusive part of a viewshed, horizon belts allow for compromise so that a house can in fact be built on a portion of a ridge. This allows for view property to be developed, provided of course it is camouflaged from important vistas. This is a signature piece of the study, and it can make the difference between a regulatory commission that will take steps necessary to protect scenic views that shape a community's identity, versus a commission that is concerned about dealing with legal challenges. In August, 2005 the Horizonline Conservation District was officially adopted.

For more information on Kent, please see:
www.esri.com/news/arcuser/0206/belts1of2.html

Pittsburgh, PA: Opportunities for Hillside Protection – Final Report

A Hillside Steering Committee (HSC) was established that included public and private sector participants. After several years of meeting and discussing recommendations for hillside protection, a final report was released in March, 2005. A summary of this report is included in the following pages, addressing options for hillside preservation and guided development which, among other things, will preserve views of hillsides as well as views of them. This is particularly relevant to the purpose of the Cincinnati Viewshed Study.

It is the belief of the HSC that adequate protection of Pittsburgh's slopes cannot occur with a single strategy. The most effective way to deal with the variety of parcel sizes, soil types, ownership options, and ecological conditions found on Pittsburgh's hillsides is a combination of techniques.

The following are general zoning recommendations put forth by the HSC:

- Clarify the intent of the "H" and "PO" zoning districts and make appropriate map changes; "H" is a hillside zoning district, and "PO" is a parks and open space district.
- Consider utilizing sub-districts within the "H" district to address the issue of appropriate lot size so that context is addressed (promoting infill rather than isolation or sprawl), or consider a flexible lot size approach that respects gradient rather than the arbitrary size of a parcel.

Pittsburgh skyline from Mt. Washington

- Expedite the Map Pittsburgh process (at the time Pittsburgh's new zoning code became effective in 1999 all former "S" districts were temporarily denoted as "PO" districts with the intention of separating true "PO" districts from "H" districts during a process called Map Pittsburgh. This process was designed to review the zoning of every city neighborhood under the new zoning code and either affirm the zoning map or make the necessary amendments to the district boundary lines).
- Have standards (rather than guidelines) associated with development in the "H" district.
- Provide regulations that will encourage cluster development where it will minimize the impact, preserve open space, and prevent sprawl.
- Establish a Steep Slope Overlay District based upon a slope of 25% or greater, with specific standards to determine if development is appropriate and specific standards for how development is to be implemented.
- Prohibit development on slopes greater than 40%.
- In determining if a site is appropriate for development, give priority to the natural and built context through specific standards that address proximity to infrastructure, proximity to other development, as well as geologic and soils limitations.
- Address the concept of buffer areas adjacent to the Steep Slope Overlay District including the brow and the toe of such slopes.
- Establish special protection for highly visible steep slope areas.
- Assure that the vast majority of the hillsides will always provide the distinctive green backdrop so important to Pittsburgh's image.

- Utilize site plan review requirements in the "H", "PO", steep slope and buffer areas.
- Review and revise as appropriate pertinent overlay zones such as the Landslide Prone and Stormwater Management Overlay Zones.

In addition to the aforementioned recommendations, the following action items were put forth as well:

- Establish a Steep Slope Overlay Zoning District (based upon all slopes of 25% or greater) that encourages conservation through strict, legally-defensible controls.
- Update the Land Development Application to require that developments proposed for steep slope areas provide detailed information for such things as slope conditions, vegetation and soils.
- Revise and re-map the "H" and "PO" zoning districts to support the Steep Slope Overlay District.
- Revise the Landslide Prone and Stormwater Management Overlay Zoning Districts to be consistent with and provide additional support for the Steep Slope Overlay District.
- Assure appropriate use of publicly controlled lands through revisions to the city's directed sale procedure and appropriate acquisition of tax delinquent hillside properties for conservation.
- Consider using conservation easements to provide open space protection for public property.
- Conduct a systematic evaluation of all publicly held or tax delinquent hillside properties.
- Evaluate, update and promote the city's Greenways for Pittsburgh Program.
- Evaluate the addition of lands to the city's parks and greenways through various mechanisms.
- Promote a stewardship ethic through improved administration, enforcement of hillside regulations, a public education campaign, and public-private partnerships.
- Establish appropriate incentives and penalties related to hillside stewardship with regard to such items as dumping, illegal tree cutting, and encroachment of public property.
- Assure that the actions of all city departments and related public entities reflect a new hillside stewardship ethic, by encouraging departments to utilize the PE/CMU Report (also known as An Ecological and Physical Investigation of Pittsburgh Hillsides – Report to the City of Pittsburgh Hillsides Committee) as the foundation for the appropriate and wise use of its hillside resources.
- Require stewardship training of city personnel who will be involved with or responsible for the care of steep slope areas.

Scenic Boulevard of Allies (SR 885) in Pittsburgh

The report also highlighted these additional recommendations:

- While there is not a need to dedicate all publicly held hillside lands as open space, there is a need to evaluate publicly held hillside lands to assure appropriate action results in hillside protection. This would be a site-by-site evaluation and ideally it would be performed citywide.
- Vacate all "paper streets" where they exist on steep slopes. This would also require that current city maps be corrected so rights-of-way that were never adopted, or those recently vacated, are not shown. This would discourage development of properties that exist adjacent to these rights-of-way and the owners of these parcels should be encouraged to participate in the new conservation easement program.
- The best means to assure that hillsides are protected and achieve their highest and best use, remaining in an undeveloped or undisturbed state, is ownership. This can also include private ownership by a non-profit entity working in concert with the city.
- There is a significant need for better enforcement related to development actions that are not consistent with approved plans. Toward that end, a new ethic of hillside stewardship must begin with those directly associated with the administration of regulations as well as management of public hillside resources.
- An intrinsic need associated with hillside conservation is stewardship. Currently there is not a citywide ethic regarding the value of hillside sites and the need to protect these sensitive resources.

For more information on Pittsburgh, please see: www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/assets/05_opportunities_hillside_protection.pdf

Portland, OR Scenic Resource Zone

The purposes of the Scenic Resource Zone are achieved by establishing height limits within view corridors to protect significant views and by establishing additional landscaping and screening standards to preserve identified scenic resources.

Public view of downtown Portland and Mt. Hood

Development Standards

View Corridors: All development and vegetation with a view corridor designation are subject to the regulations of this subsection.

1) Purpose: to establish maximum height limits within view corridors to protect significant views from specific view points.
2) Standard: all development within the designated view corridors are subject to the height limits of the base zone, except when a more restrictive height limit is established by the view corridor. In those instances, the view corridor height limit applies to both development and vegetation.

Scenic Corridors: This designation is intended to preserve and enhance the scenic character along corridors and, where possible, scenic vistas from corridors. This is accomplished by limiting the length of buildings, preserving existing trees, providing additional landscaping, preventing development in side setbacks, screening mechanical equipment and restricting signage.

Overall, the Scenic Resource Zone highlights the following goals:

- Protect Portland's scenic resources.
- Enhance the appearance of Portland to make it a better place to live and work.
- Create attractive entrance ways to Portland and its districts;
- Improve Portland's economic vitality by enhancing the city's attractiveness to its citizens and to visitors.

For more information on Portland, please see: www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=53358

Sacramento, CA Capitol View Protection Ordinance

The State Capitol building and the surrounding grounds of Capitol Park provide the City with a unique cultural and open space resource. This ordinance establishes building height limits, setback requirements, and parking alternatives within a portion of the central business district surrounding Capitol Park.

Height and setback requirements are based on distances from the Capitol building.

Aerial view of California State Capitol and surrounding Capitol Park grounds

For more information on Sacramento, please see: www.cityofsacramento.org/planning/policies-and-programs/capitol-view.cfm

San Diego, CA General Plan – Development Adjacent to Natural Features

The goals of this document, drafted in October, 2006, articulate the following elements as they relate to view issues:

- Integrate development on hillside parcels with the natural environment to preserve and enhance views, and protect areas of unique topography.

- Utilize a clustered development pattern, single story structures, or single story roof elements, or roofs sloped toward the open space system or natural features, to ensure that the visibility of new developments from natural features and open space areas are minimized.
- Provide increased setbacks from canyon rims or open space areas to ensure that the visibility of new developments is minimized.
- Ensure that the visibility of new developments from natural features and open space areas is minimized to preserve the landforms and ridgelines that provide a natural backdrop to the open space systems. For example, development should not be visible from canyon trails at the point the trail is located nearest to proposed development. Lines-of-sight from trails or open space systems could be used to determine compliance with this policy.
- Design and site buildings to permit visual and physical access to the natural features from the public right-of-way.
- Protect views from public roadways and parklands to natural canyons, resource areas, and scenic vistas.

View of LaJolla Beach – San Diego, CA

For more information on San Diego, please see: www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan/pdf/generalplan/ud061016.pdf

San Rafael, CA Hillside Design Guidelines

These guidelines apply to a citywide overlay district. An important distinction is made between new development *standards* and qualitative design *guidelines*. This distinction allows for design flexibility.

Design Standards:

Created to reduce building height and bulk, and to limit site coverage in sensitive areas. Important elements include:

- New definition of building height. A method of calculating building height from existing grade, including requirements for design to conform to topography.
- Maximum floor area. To limit building size on sensitive sites, the gross square footage of new structures is limited to an amount related to site area.
- Building stepbacks. A limitation on the maximum building envelope regulates excessive building bulk by defining a perimeter “stepback” zone.
- Natural state requirement. A portion of each hillside parcel must remain in its undeveloped natural state. The size of the undeveloped area is based on the size and slope of the site.

Design Guidelines:

- Required documentation of existing natural features.
- Minimizing grading, and preserving landforms.
- Guidelines for road and driveway alignments to minimize grading and to conform to existing topography.
- Implementation of design techniques to reduce perceived bulk of buildings.
- Illustrated techniques to design lots and structures that derive from landforms.

Working with a City Council-appointed Citizens Advisory Committee, comprised of members of City Council, City Planning Commission, City Design Review Board, and neighborhood association leaders, it took one year to produce this work. The San Rafael City Council adopted its Hillside Design Guidelines in 1991.

For more information on San Rafael, please see: www.cityofsanrafael.org/assets/cdd/5.+community+design+element.pdf.pdf

Seattle, WA View Protection Policies

The Seattle Environmental Protection Authority (SEPA) landmark view protection policy has been in place since the late 1980s, but only recently has come under intense public debate. This is due in large measure to the ongoing expansion of development, where new development is beginning to impinge upon features of the urban environment that citizens took for granted until now.

Seattle skyline from Kerry Park

Seattle has exceeded its downtown objectives, except for the Denny Triangle area, where parking lots and underdeveloped sites are still prevalent.

In an effort to maintain the rural character of King County, a program was established to transfer development credits from undeveloped King County lands to development projects in Denny Triangle, where these credits would be used to provide housing. While these efforts help ensure that Seattle plays a pivotal role in accommodating new growth, it also leads to questions about whether new development contributes positively or negatively to the values residents hold dear about the city.

Competing policy objectives are but one additional consideration in achieving a coherent and enforceable policy regarding views of public landmarks. Access and availability of the view, prominence of the view when compared with other sites, and the possibility of view obstruction by even limited development, are all factors that must be evaluated.

The Seattle study understood that the value individuals place on views is subjective, and that it is important to choose criteria reflecting broader public interests, and to evaluate a view as objectively as possible.

Notwithstanding, it is understood that objective conclusions about these views cannot encompass the intangible values that may be placed on the vista, object or quality of view. In response to this issue, it was necessary to determine whether a view provides one with an optimum view of the object, is accessible to a substantial number of people who are drawn to that place for viewing, and that the view contributes in no small way to the legacy of vistas and views that define the city and give shape and character to its identity. As a result, notable views were identified, based on criteria that included:

- The public's access to the view.
- The prominence of the landmark in the view.
- The extent to which the view could be considered noteworthy due to its unrivaled value.

A point system was established based on the range of characteristics that give a park or viewpoint significance. The view inventory assessment assigned a value in an attempt to quantify across a number of variables, a comparative measure for evaluating the relative merits of different viewpoints.

A negative value was assigned to those viewpoints where it was deemed difficult or impossible to protect the view, short of property purchase or development denial, which itself may carry significant liability for the city.

Ultimately, Seattle selected 10 locations from which view protection of its landmark Space Needle would constitute an important city objective, and from which reasonable or feasible mitigation measures could be implemented to lessen the impact of city development on the viewshed.

The study noted that, in many instances, the choice between protecting views and achieving development objectives need not be an either/or proposition; striking the right balance between the two is the critical challenge.

For more information on Seattle, please see: www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/view_protection/overview/

Tiburon, CA View Protection

This measure was created in order to preserve existing views (from residential locations) as much as possible, and to allow new dwellings access to views similar to those enjoyed from existing views. View protection elements include:

- Locating all new dwellings so they interfere minimally with views of adjacent dwellings.
- Avoiding blocking the most important features of views, such as horizon line, center of view, and slot views.
- Measuring a view for blockage by presenting the entire view from view stop on the left to view stop on the right, in order to present the situation completely.
- Including other presentation techniques such as story poles with ridge strings, photos from neighboring vantage points, models, perspectives, surveys, landscaping plans, plans/sections and elevations.

- Cutting buildings in the hillside, terracing the building uphill, and using underground spaces for functions to reduce visual bulk.
- Underground spaces for functions to reduce visual bulk.
- Breaking up the mass of structures into individual elements, using small-scale forms, and varying materials and features to break up large-scale masses.
- Making building form follow hillside slope and contours, so buildings will flow with the landscape.

Fore more information on Tiburon, please see: www.ci.tiburon.ca.us/government/guidelines%20&%20ordinances/index.asp

Summary

There are a variety of techniques for preserving views. These methods are almost always supported by mapping efforts that produce an understanding of view options, and a visual preference process involving community members, all of which achieve a better understanding of view priorities and the extent of protection desired. There is usually some form of photographic survey that helps illustrate priority views. Most view preservation regulations are comprised of overlay districts that help establish additional criteria beyond the underlying zoning.

An analysis of view protection measures was undertaken by the city of Colorado Springs. This excellent overview is covered below.

Height Restrictions: There are a number of ways to achieve this goal, all with the intention of protecting a view to a panoramic vista or to a certain point or feature within a city. In most cases, the specifics of the view plane and view corridor must first be established. This includes point of reference or starting point, the elevation or area of view to be included, and the land coverage for the view corridor restriction. A land survey typically identifies the boundaries of the view plane and restricted area. A view plane or sight line elevation is established between the reference point and distant view elevation or point, establishing maximum height levels.

From there, the most appropriate or preferable restriction technique can be incorporated, including:

- A simple maximum height for any structure within a certain distance from the edge of a view area.
- A formula to restrict building heights to elevations below an established view plane. Once the reference point, viewshed boundary and view elevation are established, the formula is developed and it is usually based on distance from the reference point.
- Building stepbacks are used to establish lower level buildings in certain areas where view corridors are desirable. In other words, within a certain distance from the property line, no height may exceed a certain level until a specified horizontal distance from the property is reached.

Site Design: Building siting requirements are commonly used in zoning. They can be taken to a new level in preserving view corridors, and they can be divided between:

Views of Natural Features or Cultural Landmarks

1) Building stepbacks may be established for certain view corridor areas. This often is achieved by implementing a simple setback along a right-of-way or scenic route in order to create more visual openness.
2) A requirement for a certain amount of unobstructed street frontage is left open from front to back.

Views from Elevated Settings

1) Side setbacks may be established to allow "seeing through" or between a series of buildings so that a solid wall is not created. An example would include a common plaza that connects two buildings, capturing the view between the structures.
2) Building orientation to allow view corridors to be established through lot coverage limits, or maximum north-south or east-west plan dimensions.
3) A building envelope may be established to create a building orientation on a certain axis, so that a building is positioned to allow views through the site.
4) Vegetation control so that when sightlines are established, trees are included in the restrictions similar to buildings.

Use Restrictions: Are often imposed to lower the intensity of development in a view corridor. For example, hotels and motels would be allowed in the base zone, but would not be permitted in view corridor designated areas.

Signs and Telecommunication Towers: Regulations governing height and design of signs and telecommunication antennas are a form of view preservation.

Hillside Development Regulations: Backdrop or hillside restrictions are established to ensure environmental protection through preservation of the natural state, and also to reduce the visual impact of development. Colorado Springs has adopted hillside regulations with the purpose of protecting unique characteristics, safeguarding the natural heritage of the City, and protecting public welfare. Many view preservation ordinances relating to hillsides include the following elements, the regulation of which requires careful study of the environment, slope and natural features of the hillsides to be regulated:

1) Limits on density
2) Building heights
3) Building colors and materials

Design Regulations: Design requirements are often imposed on scenic corridors to enhance the visual experience. San Francisco has done this, for example, by creating regulations that not only protect major scenic resources such as San Francisco Bay, but also the design of high rise buildings to ensure the character of its unique skyline.

Solar Access: Is an element of building siting and design that is related to view preservation and deals with the relationships of buildings to their heights. If a space is well designed and attractive, including good solar exposure, it is more appropriate as a primary viewpoint from which to establish view protection measures.

CITY OF CINCINNATI

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Recommendations

Recommendations

- Background
- Education and Awareness Efforts
- Proactive Vegetation Management
- Expanding Our Parkways and Greenways
- Viewshed Conservancy
- Zoning Measures

Recommendations

This study has strived to achieve three primary goals. One, it has identified, digitally recorded, priority ranked, and photographically captured various public views across the City. Two, it has summarized the view preservation measures of other cities nationwide, ones that have taken steps to preserve the quality and integrity of their unique scenic resources. Three, in this section, a variety of public policy recommendations related to view preservation are put forth for consideration, as the City of Cincinnati defines and establishes its own view preservation strategy.

View from Larz Anderson Park

Background

Interest in view protection is not new. As far back as 1896, there was a legal challenge to a Massachusetts ordinance that protected views of the state capitol building (Parker v. Commonwealth, 59 N.E. 634 (Mass. 1896)). During the 1930s, such projects as the Blue Ridge Parkway and Skyline Drive were created in an era when interest in scenic roadways swept the nation. Columbia Parkway is a prime example of this philosophy, which emerged as part of a citywide parkway strategy in the 1907 Parks Master Plan by George Kessler. Renewed interest in view preservation is growing, as national polls suggest that protection of viewsheds, view corridors, and scenic roadways are enjoying widespread political support (Duerksen & Goebel, 1999).

The most important aspect of this study is the development of an informed strategy that establishes a framework for preserving and enhancing the visual character of our magnificent public views.

In order to initiate this with the greatest degree of public support and involvement, the City of Cincinnati would be well-served to convene a small blue-ribbon committee to implement as many view preservation strategies as possible that are recommended in this study. Ideally, this group would consist of officials from the City's Law, Economic Development and Planning, Building and Inspections, and Parks and Recreation Departments. It would also include several representatives from key neighborhood groups, especially Mt. Adams, and a representative from a planning and design firm, and one from the local Chamber of Commerce. It is expected that this working group would lend immeasurable experience and credibility to the recommendations and action items it puts forth for implementation. The working group would be given a time frame of perhaps six to nine months to establish its priorities, after which it would present them to the City Planning Commission and to City Council for final approval and action.